

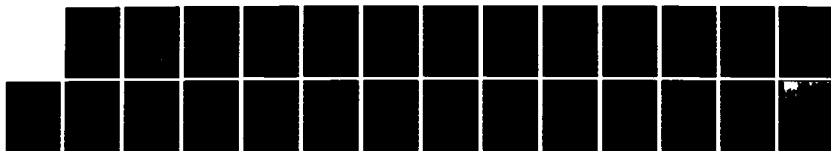
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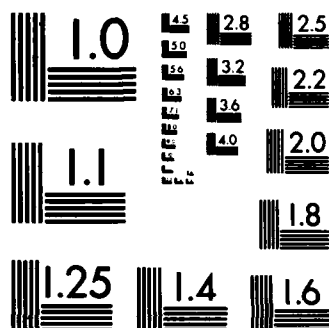
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**CULTURAL RESOURCES RECONNAISSANCE STUDY OF THE  
BLACK WARRIOR-TOMBIGBEE SYSTEM CORRIDOR, ALABAMA**

**VOLUME V**

**CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SUMMARY**

by

**Eugene M. Wilson**

**1983**

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Submitted to the  
U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District  
by the  
Department of Geology and Geography  
University of South Alabama  
Mobile

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## VOLUME V

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## ABSTRACT

This volume summarizes the results of a cultural resources reconnaissance in the Black Warrior-Tombigbee corridor between Demopolis and Mobile, Alabama. The report of this study is in five volumes: archaeology, ethnohistory, history, special studies, and management summary. The archaeology volume contains descriptions of culture periods, ceramic descriptions and chronology, and a predictive model of site locations. The ethnohistory volume is primarily a history of changes in Indian culture and locations of various groups in the corridor as they were influenced by Europeans from 1650 to 1812. The third volume reviews the European history of the region from 1500 to 1940. The fourth volume covers special topics: housing and architecture, watercraft, river-oriented industries including musselling, stave-making, and pull-boat logging, and navigation locks and bridges. A summary of each of these volumes constitutes the management summary.

## CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

### INTRODUCTION

The Cultural Resources Reconnaissance of the Black Warrior-Tombigbee Corridor, Alabama, began September 28, 1980 and was completed June 1, 1983. This contract work was performed through the Department of Geology and Geography, University of South Alabama, Mobile, Alabama, for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District.

The study area was defined as a corridor along the Black Warrior-Tombigbee River five miles wide from Demopolis Lock and Dam south to the U.S. Highway 43 bridge at Jackson, Alabama, and as a ten mile wide corridor to include the lower Tombigbee-Alabama River delta south of Highway 43 to the foot of Government Street in Mobile, Alabama. The corridor is approximately 154 miles in length and contains 1049 square miles. The corridor crosses six physiographic districts of the East Gulf Coastal Plain section: the Black Belt, Interior Flatwoods, Southern Red Hills, Tallahatta Hills, Southern Pine Hills and the Mobile Delta.

As defined in the Scope of Work, "cultural resources are ... those fragile and nonrenewable evidences of human activity, occupation, and endeavor as reflected in districts, sites, structures, artifacts, objects, ruins, works of art, architecture, and natural features that were important in human events." In order to perform a reconnaissance of cultural resources in the Black Warrior-Tombigbee corridor (hereafter, BWT), a multi-disciplinary approach was used. More than thirty people were involved in the work which was organized into five categories: administration, archaeology, ethnohistory, history, and special studies. The latter include housing and architecture, and river-oriented industries.

Each of these categories had a director and a budget. A schedule for each phase of the reconnaissance was established. Modifications of the contract schedule were required in order to allow additional time for editing and re-writing. The final report of the BWT reconnaissance is in five parts: archaeology, ethnohistory, history, special studies, and a management summary, volumes I through V, respectively. Each of these will be reviewed in the following discussions.

I wish to express my appreciation to the authors of the other volumes of this report for their efforts in the completion of the project. I also wish to acknowledge the assistance of Charles W. Moorehead and Jerry J. Nielsen, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District. We especially appreciate the work of Janet Clute who served as project secretary and laboratory assistant and give special thanks to Diane Hartley and Gloria Cole for typing and editing.

*Eugene M. Wilson*  
Eugene M. Wilson  
Principal Investigator  
Department of Geology & Geography  
University of South Alabama



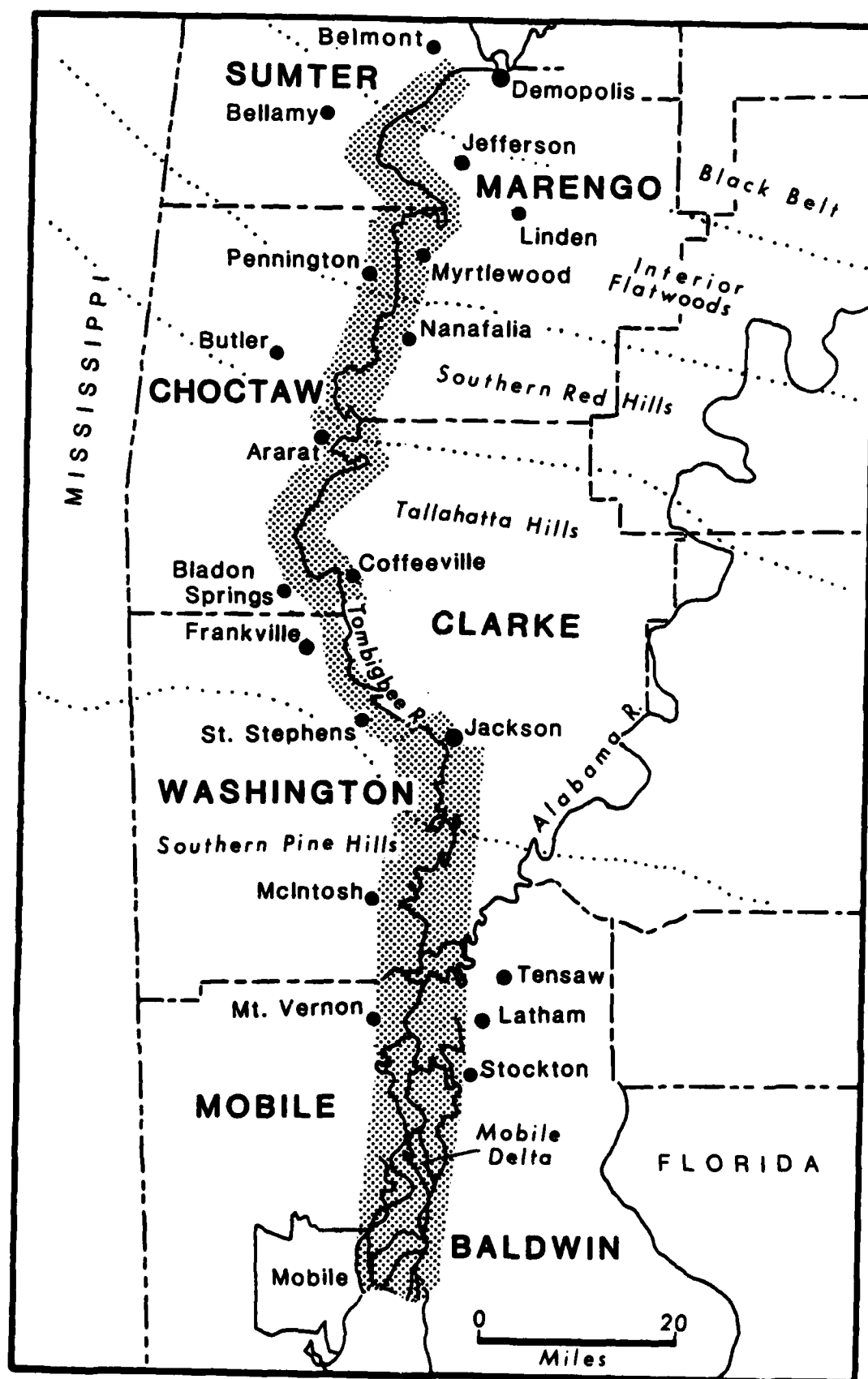


Figure 1. Black Warrior-Tombigbee Corridor.

## BLACK WARRIOR-TOMBIGBEE CORRIDOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECONNAISSANCE

David S. Brose, Ned Jenkins, and Russell Weisman

This volume on the archaeological reconnaissance is a composite work by several research writers and an editor. Thus it is characterized by different writing styles, some parts being direct and relatively succinct, others being stylistic with lengthy discussion and interpretation. Much of this volume goes beyond what normally might be considered as a reconnaissance report. The volume consists of three parts (eight chapters): background, investigations of this contract, and site location models which includes conclusions, summary, discussion of culture period classification, and recommendations. Appendices include discussions of sampling techniques, geomorphology, delta vegetation, radiocarbon determinations and a summary of historic site material.

Chapter I describes the Scope of Work and plan for the archaeological reconnaissance. Following this, in Chapter II, is a review of previous research on the BWT. Historical records may provide material useful to the archaeologist, such as the location of old St. Stephens and the boundary between West Florida and the Mississippi Territory. Sites have been lost through natural erosion of streams and through the commercial use of shells from middens since the early 1700s. In 1851 the first "scientific" account of the shell middens in the lower Mobile Delta was written by C. S. Hale. Sites from this and subsequent nineteenth century observations by other writers have been identified in this reconnaissance. C. B. Moore investigated many sites in the BWT corridor in a more systematic method in 1899. However, the first modern controlled excavations were done by DeJarnette, Tourtelot, and Miller in the 1930s and 1940s. Since then, most of the work has been concentrated in the delta portion of the corridor and included the historic sites of Ft. Louis de la Mobile and Ft. Conde.

Chapter III discusses a model for selecting sites for the first phase of the work. This hypothesis is ecologically based, i.e., that prehistoric group behavior was not random but was closely related to the natural environment. Thus, there should be regular patterns in the locations of prehistoric sites and certain ecological variables. It should be possible to determine these variables at known sites and make a predictive statement about the location of the unknown sites. A model is presented for each of the archaeological periods, incorporating work by other researchers in this region, as follows.

Paleo-Indian and Early Archaic environments are not well known except in general patterns. Earliest human occupation of this region is dated to about 10,000 BC and is associated with Clovis-related lithic technology. Early sites have been found on hilltops, bluffs, and locations providing a variety of necessities, and exposures of useful rocks. Early occupation sites, prior to about 7500 BC, in the lower part of the Mobile Delta (as well as in the present Tombigbee floodplain) have been buried by recent sea level rise and alluvation, and stream meandering. Limited excavations and poor preservation limits interpretation. However, it is suggested that in Early Archaic time,

groups increased in size and in density. Consequently, subsistence activities were more restricted and probably more seasonal.

Modern environmental conditions developed in the Southeast during Middle Archaic time, 4000 to 2500 BC. Greater environmental diversity brought increasingly seasonal and more specialized subsistence pursuits, particularly in the delta. Larger occupation sites became more numerous suggesting a larger population. Greater stylistic variation of tools appeared. Sites are to be expected on high terraces, upland surfaces where tributaries enter the valley, and natural levees of old channels.

Late Archaic and the Gulf Formational stage was a time of environmental change although there appears to have been no change in population. Some increased specialization in subsistence patterns occurred and possibly some population movements took place. Both large multifamily base camps and small single-purpose campsites could be present in the corridor. In the delta, rapid sedimentation has probably buried most sites of this period. Quite different economic activity and settlement patterns were predicted for the delta and river portions of the corridor in Late Archaic time.

Middle and Late Woodland (500 BC - AD 900) sites in the northern part of the river valley differed from those in southern valley and in the delta. In the north, three Miller phases were present while the south was represented by Porter and McLeod ceramics. Elaboration of ceremonial and burial rituals, some highly decorative ceramics and, after AD 600, population growth with larger and more numerous sites characterize this period.

The discussion of the model for the Mississippian period, AD 1000-1500, is relatively long and includes reviews of various interpretations of life in this period, both hypothetical and theoretical. In general, population increase, the use of temple mounds, probable hierarchial social classes, agricultural villages, high quality ceramics, ground and polished axes and celts, and extended burials without interment in mounds, were characteristic of this period. Much discussion concerns possible origins, subsistence, and location of Mississippian centers.

The time from AD 1500-1700 in this report is termed the Protohistoric period. In the corridor the model proposed both hierarchically structured and less structured settlement patterns, seasonal hunting and collecting with agriculture on river terraces. A small number of scattered ceremonial centers would have been located near well drained surfaces close to active streams in the river portion of the corridor. The delta was seen to have been influenced by coastal people.

The Ethnohistoric period (AD 1700-1830) sites have historic documentation but cannot be clearly identified with any one group because of many population movements within a relatively short period of time. European trade goods found on an aboriginal site do not prove contact occurred with Europeans. These materials were widely traded among many native groups. Aboriginal population decline was characteristic in the BWT corridor, as in other parts of the Americas.

The model for archaeological site locations was obtained both from documents and known sites and was to be verified by the field survey. An attempt was to be made to analyze the types and distribution of features and patterns and to predict undocumented sites.

Chapter IV describes the development and implementation of a sample design. After reviewing over 200 site records and other published material, environmental data that were deemed most important for site locations were recorded. These included topography, soil drainage, and distance to water. Then, areas with a high probability of containing sites were located on maps within each of eight physiographic zones included in the corridor.

The samples were limited to cultivated fields and 60 to 80 sample areas 500 meters square were selected based on the UTM grid. Four and one-half days were allowed for each physiographic zone.

A surface collection was made along transects at 15 to 20 meter intervals in each sample block and roadcuts, gullies, and other exposures were examined. A small amount of shallow excavation was done. Sites were photographed, assigned site numbers and located on topographic maps.

The field survey recorded 93 new sites and 11 known sites, in the sample areas, were reexamined. Seventeen sites adjacent to the sample areas were also recorded. Sixty sample areas were surveyed in 48 days.

Ceramic Summary and Chronology is the subject of Chapter V, by Ned Jenkins. Aboriginal ceramics are organized according to their primary temper material: shell, clay, fine sand, coarse sand/grit, limestone, and fiber. Seventy-three types are described of which 29 are fine sand tempered. The ceramics of each physiographic district are identified and a discussion of ceramic chronology in each district is presented. The earliest ceramic material is dated c. 1000 BC and is classed as Wheeler series (fiber tempered). The corridor appears to contain two geographically distinct cultural associations at least in the earlier phases. The ceramics from the delta north through the Tallahatta Hills are related to material from coastal sites. North of the Tallahatta Hills the ceramics are related to those of interior sites. However, very little Mississippian period (AD 1000-1541) material was found in the Flatwoods and Southern Red Hills. Mississippian ceramics (Pensacola series) are abundant in the Mobile Delta. It is postulated that after an introduction of Moundville I ceramics (AD 1000), the lower Tombigbee River, Mobile Delta, Mobile Bay, and coastal areas evolved through a different sequence than did the Mississippian ceramics in the Black Warrior and Upper Tombigbee Valleys.

Chapter VI, entitled "Definitional Considerations," is a discussion of each aboriginal culture period and various interpretations, hypotheses, and theories, with the objective of establishing what characteristics identify each period. It incorporates the results of many other researchers in the Southeast and reviews a multitude of archaeological temporal and spatial terminology.

Modeling site locations and evaluation of survey data is discussed in Chapter VII. Previous studies were concentrated in the delta and lower river valley and appear to have over-represented the floodplains and river bluffs. These studies were not structured by sampling techniques, thus the present study results differ somewhat. Sites having chronologically indeterminate components, probably short term specialized sites, were more numerous in the lower part of the delta and in the river floodplain than in the upper delta and uplands adjacent to the river. Multicomponent sites recorded for the BWT corridor totalled 149. These included 345 distinguishable components. Most multicomponent sites (93 percent) were located less than 500m from the edge of a bluff overlooking the floodplain.

No Paleo-Indian sites and few Archaic sites were found in the survey. Archaic material on the floodplain appears to have been redeposited by stream action. Archaic sites were found on the edges of bluffs overlooking the river floodplain and the delta.

Sixty-nine percent of Gulf Formational or Early Woodland sites (58 total) were in the delta and about 15 percent were found in the Tallahatta Hills zone. Most (83 percent) were located on natural levees on or near major distributaries or on the bluffs overlooking the river floodplain and the delta.

One hundred twenty-six sites with Mississippian components were located during the survey. The majority (89 percent) were located in the delta portion of the corridor. Most were located on natural levees of large channels particularly at channel junctions. Many Mississippian sites were also located on the marsh islands in the lower delta. In the river portion of the corridor, Mississippian sites were mainly on the bluffs overlooking the floodplain and were small with short term occupation. Between the Black Belt and the upper delta, no large Mississippian mound sites were located.

No firm conclusions can be drawn from 20 Protohistoric sites except that they contained both aboriginal and early European materials. Eighteen of these sites were located in the delta, most on the bluffs, in contrast to Mississippian site locations.

Seventy historic sites were recorded. In the river portion of the corridor, these were nearly all on the bluff overlooking the active channel. In the delta, many were located on natural levees, or on aboriginal shell middens and appear to have been hunting and fishing camps. One group of sites in the marshes were identified as ridge-field gardens. This activity occurred from about 1870 to 1930.

A predictive model of site locations was developed. There were different site locations for the several periods, as the previous chapter shows. It is noted, however, that 82 percent of all sites were found on well drained soils except in the Delta Meander and Delta Marsh zones, where less than half the sites were on well drained soils. In the river section north of the delta, about 60 percent of the sites were within 500m of the active river channel. On the uplands, 80 percent of all sites investigated were within 500 m of the bluff edge. In the river

section, about 20 percent of all sites were near major tributaries. In the delta section, 40 to 50 percent of the sites were within 500m of secondary channels. Other associations of sites and tributaries or distributaries are noted. Some statistical procedures employed did not produce significant results for site prediction.

Archaeologically sensitive environments as determined by this reconnaissance are as follows.

- 1) In the river section of the corridor well-drained soils of both the river terraces and the floodplain 500m or less from the active channel, inactive channels, or major tributary junctions. Only about five percent of the total area, such places contained about 19 percent of all sites.
- 2) Uplands of both the river and delta sections in which well-drained relatively level soils occur within 500m of a bluff overlooking an active channel and cut by a minor tributary within 500m but more than 500m from a major tributary. Containing about two percent of the corridor area, such places contained over ten percent of all sites.
- 3) In the delta, relatively well-drained soils of the natural levees of major distributary channels within 500m of large connecting channels but 500m or more from inactive channels, minor tributaries, bays, or basins. Making up just over eight percent of the corridor area, these places contained about 25 percent of delta sites.
- 4) Uplands fringing the delta having level, well-drained soil adjacent to any tributary and directly overlooking tributary or distributary junctions contained less than two percent of the delta but contained five percent of the sites.

These four environments, representing less than 20 percent of the total area, contained 59 percent of the known archaeological sites. The remaining sites were nearly unsystematically distributed over the remaining 80 percent of the corridor.

Summary and Conclusions are presented in Chapter VIII. An estimated 8300 archaeological sites may be present in the corridor of which over 4800 are in the archaeologically sensitive environments. These appear to represent environments within which we expect to have a 67.5 percent probability of finding 59 percent of the archaeological sites which may exist.

Regional comparisons with previous studies in the upper Tombigbee, the Black Warrior, the Coosa-Alabama, the Chattahoochee, and river basins in Georgia and Mississippi are discussed in relation to environments, site densities, and sampling. Lengthy speculations of prehistoric culture history and population patterns in the corridor are included. This section also summarizes the archaeology of the corridor.

Recommendations for future work in the BWT corridor include the following.

- 1) Additional study and rigorous statistical evaluation should be made of archaeologically sensitive environments.
- 2) The future minimum site size for significant archaeological recovery should be 2000 square meters (20,000 square feet).
- 3) Future investigations should include less total area and greater funding.
- 4) More detailed soil, floral, and hydrographic mapping should be done for each physiographic zone in order to locate potentially significant archaeological sites.
- 5) A subsurface testing program should be implemented and Late Pleistocene-Recent stratigraphy and geomorphology clarified. This would help to understand Paleo-Indian and Archaic site distribution.
- 6) Future studies should provide adequate time and support for study of ceramic collections from other areas for comparison.
- 7) Historic period sites that should be evaluated include Civil War defenses in Mobile, in the delta, and the salt works, a battery and a ship yard in southern Clarke County. In addition, the Apache encampment at Mt. Vernon Arsenal and the sites of old Locks 1, 2, and 3 should be archaeologically evaluated.
- 8) Color infrared aerial photography should be used on future investigations, particularly in the lower delta.
- 9) Further archaeological investigations are recommended for the area to include the lower Tombigbee, Mobile Delta, Mobile Bay and the coast.

Lastly, a number of unresolved questions that will require additional research are listed.

Five appendices are included in the report: area sampling techniques, geology and geomorphology of the lower Tombigbee-Mobile Valley, vegetation of the Mobile Delta, radiocarbon determinations, and historic-material.

A DOCUMENTARY STUDY OF NATIVE AMERICAN LIFE  
IN THE LOWER TOMBIGBEE VALLEY

George E. Lankford

This is primarily a history of the changes in the Indian culture and group locations under the impact of Europeans from 1650 to 1812. It reviews and discusses the probable locations and movements of each Indian group in the corridor, complete with names and alternate spellings and interpretations and briefly notes the background events responsible for their movements. It establishes the framework for future archaeological fieldwork in providing, as far as is known to date, the probable sequence of occupation of many sites on the Black Warrior-Tombigbee. Given the historical data, which is shadowy, we have the best picture now available and it raises basic questions about prehistory. The impermanence of site occupation is clearly evident. In a period of less than 200 years there was continuous culture change. This may not be recognized by archaeological excavation. It will be most difficult to identify Mauvila, Tawasa, Apalachee, Chato or other native ceramics in the ethnohistorical record.

This volume includes a review of complicated events of Black Warrior-Tombigbee history in time periods, primarily in a narrative style that follows the sequence of events. In Chapter I a look back into the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries (1650-1704) notes the results of early European competition in the Southeast. This included the establishment of English, French, and Spanish outposts and buffer zones and manipulation of Indian groups to war and to provide Europeans with hides and slaves. The earliest descriptions by the French of the Mobile Delta and Indian settlements locations are examined and a discussion of Southeastern native languages is included.

An explanation of the talwa concept is an important inclusion to understand the real meaning of native place names. The talwa was a geographically and temporally mobile patrilineal ceremonial identification of a group of families within a nation. Hence, the same place (talwa) name, Coosa, for example, could be in different locations at different times, leading to location problems when reading various European accounts.

Other topics include subsistence and material culture, the salt trade, and mortuary customs. Subsistence was seasonal with tribes near the coast separating into small groups in the fall for hunting and gathering. Interior tribes such as the Choctaw probably planted two maize crops per year, in early spring and summer, with gathering and hunting in between. Harvesting the last crop in the fall was followed by winter hunting of deer and bison from the permanent villages. The towns and fields in the lower Black Warrior-Tombigbee were contiguous and the hunting or fishing camps nearby. Mauvila towns were on river bluffs with fields on the floodplain. Salt springs near present Jackson and northward around the Hatchetigbee anticline provided an important trade product of the Tomeh and Naniaba. Mortuary customs, aside from those of the Choctaw, were not recorded by the French.



In Chapter II, 1519 to 1561, the discussion concerns the observations of the early Spanish incursions, Pineda, Narvaez, Cabeza de Vaca, Soto, Luna, speculating on the location of tribes encountered. Early in the sixteenth century, the Tomeh were the first group recorded living on the lower Tombigbee; some Alabamas were on the lower Alabama and Mauvila inhabited the area between the two. Prior to 1675 the Alabamas moved east and Mauvila moved south.

Chapter III covers the years 1704 to 1763 and reviews a very dynamic period of which considerably more history is known. These years saw the great manipulation of native people by the Europeans that resulted in their displacement, and intertribal warfare. As with the Spanish in Mexico, catastrophic native population losses from diseases occurred from 1700 onward with the arrival of the French. Dependence upon European trade goods by the Indians who in turn supplied animal hides and slaves brought irreversible cultural and ecological changes. These included altered settlement and hunting patterns, the appearance of a mixed-blood class, modified agricultural practices, livestock raising, the disappearance of eastern bison and probably other species, the great reduction of deer and their predators. At the end of the French colonial period (1763) most of the tribes in the lower Tombigbee Valley followed the departing French westward.

In Chapter IV, 1763 to 1813, the discussion deals with the British, Spanish and American occupation of the lower Tombigbee and a continuation of the manipulation, acculturation, and decrease in native populations. Some Frenchmen stayed on and were allowed to keep their properties but the new grants were made to British people. Two Koasati and two Alabama towns (one Wetumpka and one Okchai town) moved into the Tombigbee Valley from the upper Alabama River. The Koasati returned to the Alabama River by 1771. An influx of Americans entered the lower Tombigbee Valley after the Revolution. The last aboriginal occupation in the lower Tombigbee came to an end in 1812 with the departure of the Choctaw. The Americans occupied the city of Mobile in 1813.

In a summary, it is noted that a great amount - most - of the details of native life is missing from the record of materials now translated into English. It is obvious that the next step must be a search of French and Spanish colonial records while archaeologists seek to recover data from the occupation sites.

A DOCUMENTARY SURVEY OF HISTORIC SETTLEMENT  
IN THE LOWER TOMBIGBEE VALLEY

David C. Weaver

In contrast to the narrative style of Lankford, Weaver presents ten chapters primarily arranged topically under major time periods covering 1500 to 1940. This is a detailed factual presentation rather than an historical interpretation. A useful chronology of main events with over 250 entries is included. Following each of three chapters on political and military history is a separate chapter on economic development. Finally, there is a chapter on the geographical overview of settlement and an extensive bibliography.

Chapter I is a review of the objectives and the requirements of this part of the reconnaissance. Chapter II is an outline of the main historical events in the lower Tombigbee in chronological order. Chapters III and IV consider political, military, and economic developments from 1500 to 1798. Much of the material in chapters II, IV, V, and VI was based on Hamilton's Colonial Mobile (Hamilton 1901) although many other writers were consulted.

Chapter III traces the beginning of European history from Pineda's exploration. By 1520 Mobile Bay was shown on European maps as Bahia del Espiritu Santo. A brief settlement was made by Luna at Escambia Bay. In 1682 La Salle claimed the northern Gulf Coast for France, which it retained until 1763. To keep out the English, France sent Iberville to establish a colony in 1698-1699. There followed a period of continuous struggle between the English, French and Spanish for domination of the region south of the Appalachians that resulted in the manipulation of the Indian groups. Permanent French settlement was attempted in Louisiana on the Mississippi and the capital was moved from Mobile to Biloxi in 1720, then to New Orleans in 1723. The Treaty of Paris in 1763 ceded the lower Tombigbee to Britain. The British began the purchase of Indian lands for settlement and during the American Revolution a number of Tories settled in the Tombigbee Valley and around Mobile. The Spanish seized Mobile and the southernmost portion of the Tombigbee River until it became American territory in 1813.

The economic development during the colonial period is the subject of Chapter IV. During the early colonial period the mercantile system prevailed. The British, French, and Spanish colonies provided raw materials and purchased finished products from the mother country. There was slow population growth and limited European expansion on the Black Warrior-Tombigbee until after 1763. The number of farming settlers on the banks of the Mobile and Tensaw Rivers was less than fifty, for example, and Mobile itself had about 350 people. The British encouraged settlement during their occupation but the first great increase came after the American Revolution.

The primary colonial raw materials from the Black Warrior-Tombigbee were fur, hides, indigo, timber, resin, livestock, bear grease, rice,

tobacco, salt beef, fish, pecans, and sassafras. In 1720 the Law Concession brought agricultural settlers to provide cash crops for Europe and the Caribbean that included figs, oranges, indigo, tobacco, and rice. This did not all meet the expectations of the concession. French plantations appeared after 1720 with grants combining both upland and floodplain or delta. The British made agriculture their primary mode of exploitation and settlement along the rivers was rapid. Indigo was an important crop during the period 1763 to 1790 but the plantations were diverse and stable, producing a balance of subsistence and cash crops.

Land transportation during the colonial period was along Indian trails which followed stream divides, where possible. Some were quite long, reaching far into present Florida, and from Georgia, to the central part of Alabama and into Mississippi. Trade goods followed such trails from Mobile and Pensacola.

During the American period 1799 to 1860, reviewed in Chapters V and VI, political subdivision of the Mississippi Territory, obtained from the region claimed by Georgia, proceeded with the formation of states and counties. There followed the establishment of roads which facilitated the movement of settlers into the lower Tombigbee. Political events and conflict over land led to the Creek War 1813-1814. This was followed by a surge of settlement and to the formation of the states of Mississippi and Alabama, by 1819. Settlement and agriculture were the main preoccupations from 1820 to 1860 and the main problems concerned Indian removal. The first areas of settlement, before 1830, were along major streams and on the stream divides. The Black Belt became important for settlement after 1830 and soon became an important plantation region. In contrast, the southern Tombigbee counties - Mobile, Baldwin, Clarke, and Washington, were producing forest products, cotton, and livestock, had a larger white population and smaller landholdings. Mobile became a major lumber exporter, particularly to the Caribbean with Cuba the leading importer from 1820 to 1860. The floodplain and delta supplied most of the timber while the upland pine-savannas provided range for livestock, especially cattle, until the end of the nineteenth century. Industries were local and included tanneries, grist mills, cotton gins, brick ovens, and salt works.

Transportation was given much attention during the nineteenth century and greatly modified the early patterns of settlement. Rolling hogsheads, hogsheads with an axle, pulled by a draft animal, and wagons required improved roads. The first main route was the "Old Federal Road," originally an Indian path, then a "horse path," and by 1811 a wagon road, that was the principal route from Ft. Mitchell, on the west side of the Chattahoochee River, to the Old Southwest - the Tombigbee settlements and beyond. To westward migrants, Demopolis, St. Stephens, and Mobile were important road centers. After statehood, local public county seats, and thoroughfares between regional centers were built. Private toll roads were also established but most important were post roads which became main highways for mail stages and passengers.

Railroads were built by coastal cities to protect their trade hinterland from possible loss to competing rail lines penetrating the

interior. Thus, construction of the Mobile and Ohio Railroad began in 1851 through the trade territory of Mobile to the west of the Tombigbee River. Serious competition with river transportation occurred after the Civil War.

As the interior population increased, the Tombigbee became the primary supply line for manufactured goods from Mobile and was the route for cotton and other products. Steamboats replaced flatboats and keelboats as the principal means of transport by the 1830s. Numerous landings and woodyards appeared along the river. Winter floods and low water in the summer were serious hazards to traffic, however.

Towns appeared rapidly after 1798, the main ones being on the river bluffs and smaller ones some distance from the river. Most important of the early towns was the former Spanish settlement at St. Stephens which became the first and only Alabama Territorial capital in 1817. Improvement in the river channel and a yellow fever epidemic brought its decline and a new St. Stephens was built a few miles away in 1845. Coffeetown, Jackson, Demopolis, and Blakely were other new river towns that developed before 1820. Yellow fever epidemics brought on the decline of Blakely before 1830.

Chapter VII deals with the general political decline of the region 1861 to 1945. Alabama was raided three times and there were continuous military operations around Mobile since it was a major Confederate port until the Battle of Mobile Bay in August, 1864. Only three fortifications were built above Mobile in the Black Warrior-Tombigbee corridor: at Carney's Bluff and Oven Bluff to protect the salt works and ship building.

Alabama did not fare well in the post-war period because of manpower and property losses. The importance of the Tombigbee and of Mobile lessened with the decline of the cotton economy and the beginning of mining and industries in other sections. Problems of reconstruction and economic-political adjustments continued until 1901 when a new constitution was drafted that settled the political order with White supremacy in voting rights. Regulation of railroads, industry, real estate taxes, education and other laws followed. Prohibition became a major issue from 1900 to 1937. Road and education improvements began in the 1920 and 1930s, during which time the depression brought Alabama closer to the Federal Government in its relief programs. World War II left the state in its best condition since 1860.

Chapter VIII specifically deals with economic development from 1861 to 1940. The population growth experienced to 1860 and the economic growth of the plantation system were reversed after 1865. War deaths and immigration west brought a decline in the White population while the Black population increased slightly in counties of the Black Warrior-Tombigbee.

The first major economic event was the migrating lumber industry that employed mostly Black workers in clear cutting timber. While Mobile may have prospered from lumber exports, most income was gained by outsiders and the land was left nearly worthless. After 1930, scientific improvements made paper mills and sustained yield forestry possible.

In agriculture, the high price of cotton brought on the establishment of the tenant plantation system in which land was leased to individual farmers for a share of the produce. Croppers owned no livestock or farming equipment and lived in houses provided by the land owner. The cropper received half the crop for his labor. Share tenants owned mules and implements and paid less than half the crop for the land rent. Some paid a fixed cash amount for land rent. By 1880 about one-third of the Black Belt farms were share-cropped and about one-fourth were cash rented. In the Lower Tombigbee region after 1865, many farms failed, fewer acres were cultivated and farm value declined until the 1930s.

Industries were mostly related to agriculture and timber. These included cotton ginning and baling, cotton spinning, cotton seed oil production, milling grain, tanning, fertilizer production, logging, sawmilling, and naval stores. Although a paper mill was built as early as 1856 near Mobile, it was not until after 1920 that paper mills were industrially important on the Tombigbee. In 1880, Mobile had 91 factories of various kinds employing 704 persons, the largest industry being flour and grist milling. Shipbuilding was stimulated by World War I and World War II.

In transportation, little internal improvement was done until after 1907 when the state began to undertake road building, establishing a highway department in 1911. Through highways began in 1918 with what is now U.S. 80 across the state. Railroad building had just started before the Civil War. Small lines were consolidated into companies that were controlled by interests outside the state. The lines captured much of the river traffic and the population along the Tombigbee as new towns appeared along the railroads for a more dependable all-weather transportation system. Logging railroads facilitated the lumber industry in clear cutting and moving timber, 1890-1915.

Transportation on the Tombigbee was not replaced entirely by the railroads. Harbor and bay channel improvements and locks and dams on the river began between 1875 and 1880 and are continuing. The shallow bay channel, seasonal volume of the river and rail shipment to other preferred ports almost brought about the demise of Mobile as a port city. After 1915, coal became a major bulk export commodity, along with wood products. The first coal barged arrive in Mobile on July 15, 1915.

Urban development in the Tombigbee Valley after 1865 was stagnant except at Jackson and Mobile. The population of Mobile declined until around 1890 then doubled over the next 40 years reaching 62,200 in 1930. By 1940 the population was 78,720. At least part of this resulted from deepening the ship channel to 23 feet after 1888, allowing seagoing ships into the harbor, construction of locks and dams on the Tombigbee, and the building of the State Docks 1923-1929. Jackson grew as a result of the Mobile and Birmingham Railroad in 1886-1887 which brought in lumber industries - timber companies, planer mills, and various sawmills and enjoyed relative prosperity until the 1920s.

In Chapter IX, a geographical overview of settlement in the Black Warrior-Tombigbee corridor is discussed. The objective is to provide generalizations, or "models" of the developmental process which may be evaluated at some later time.

Parts of seven physiographic districts fall within the corridor, some having very distinctive qualities. One of the most distinctive physical areas in the South is the Black Belt of Alabama and Mississippi. A combination of limestone strata, fertile soils, and hardwood forest with some scattered "prairies" on a gently rolling surface made it unique in the area. At the opposite extreme is the Southern Red Hills that includes the Tallahatta cuesta, an inclined stratum of very hard sandstone that forms steep hills 300 to 400 feet above the streams. Like most of the physiographic districts, the soils are not very fertile and the vegetation is dominantly pine.

The population of the lower Tombigbee included American Indian, European and Euro-American, African and Afro-American, each making its own contributions to the cultural landscape. The American Indian impact was not great; the European hunter-stockman made some reduction of the natural landscape but most resulted from the introduction of European agriculture. Two classes have been described: yeoman farmer/upland South, occupying the hill-pine forest areas, and the planter/Lowland South from the Atlantic Coast occupying (by 1830s) the Black Belt and other limestone and alluvial areas and employing the plantation system. Industries, special services, government and associated professions, and the more refined social life were concentrated in towns. Afro-American impact was largely as laborers in the plantation system, as tenant farmers and as workers in the lumber industry. As freemen, Black agricultural and forest industry communities were established in several places in the Black Warrior-Tombigbee corridor during the 1870s and 1880s.

Several kinds of agricultural operations in the lower Black Warrior-Tombigbee are recognized. The subsistence farmstead based on gardening and livestock raising, was typical of the early Tombigbee settlements in which immigrants of the Upland South tradition dominated. The colonial bottomland mixed crop plantation was common during the French period. This operation produced a variety of crops - rice, indigo, cotton, tobacco, timber and livestock, was located on river bluffs and included both bluff and floodplain cultivation. The classic nineteenth century plantation in the Black Warrior-Tombigbee corridor was not in the floodplain but on higher ground adjacent to the river and was primarily concerned with cotton as a cash crop and used slave labor. The most important plantation area was the Black Belt. After the Civil War the plantation tenant farm developed. This was a system using land rental for cash or shared produce, mostly cotton, of the land owner and the farm laborer and was important in the Black Belt. The workers quarters were commonly dispersed in the plantation tenant system but was otherwise quite similar to the pre-war plantation.

Industries in the Black Warrior-Tombigbee corridor during the nineteenth century were very limited and were mostly light and small scale: cotton ginning, corn grinding, cotton seed oil, cotton spinning, and so on. The major modern industries are those of forest products, lumber and paper mills.

Transportation was overland and by the Tombigbee River which was the primary artery until after the Civil War. Railroads mostly followed

routes well beyond the river. A number of settlements grew up along the railroads but river towns were few and small with the exception of Mobile and Demopolis. Jackson especially prospered from the railroad and the associated forest industries. Rural hamlets were located mostly at a road junction, rail crossing, stream crossing or combination of these and were kinship or congregation related.

No eighteenth century buildings are present in the Black Warrior-Tombigbee corridor. However, some buildings remain from the nineteenth century, mainly in Mobile and in the Black Belt that reflect colonial and classical revival styles. Between these two ends of the corridor, the dominant dwelling types derive from the Upland South tradition. Until the past 20 years, the entire region was very conservative regarding housing styles.

## SPECIAL TOPICS VOLUME

Eugene M. Wilson, Philippe Oszuscik,  
Cailup B. Curren, Jr., and JoAnn Luker

This volume includes material on buildings and architectural styles with emphasis on rural house types, a chapter on watercraft, especially bay and river steamers, a chapter on local river-oriented industries, and a chapter on engineering structures including locks and dams and bridges on the lower Black Warrior-Tombigbee. These cultural resources are seldom of great antiquity but some century-old buildings exist. All the steam vessel types described have disappeared, either scrapped or sunk, and in the latter case their remains may be preserved in part.

Chapter I describes the results of a housing and architectural study in the corridor. A geographical model has been developed through several studies of housing in the Southeast. A century ago, E. A. Smith noted associations of agricultural systems and relative soil fertility. This study basically found that the early nineteenth century plantation system came to be dominant in soils of high natural fertility. After mid-century, the system was modified but the Black population still remained as a majority. Rural Whites outnumber Blacks in areas of poor soils. Rural house type distribution patterns in the 1960s still reflected these associations. Upland South and Lowland South characteristics were described by Newton. The Upland South was a White subsistence farming-livestock raising economy that was dominant in the hill lands while the Lowland South plantation system, derived from the Atlantic Coast of the Carolinas, Virginia and Maryland subsequently occupied lowland areas of fertile soils, notably the Tennessee Valley, Coosa Valley, and the Black Belt in Alabama. Some distinctive house types are characteristic of each culture area. For example, the two-story I house, many in Classic Revival styles, the double pen, central chimney saddlebag, and single pen types distinguish the Lowland South areas while the log dogtrot and the log single pen were typical of the Upland South areas. These relations still hold in the lower Black Warrior-Tombigbee River corridor, although the Upland portions have undergone considerable change. The breakup of the plantation system and large scale timber cutting brought about the establishment of a number of small Black settlements, some close to lumber mills. A general exodus of Upland South Whites has taken place over the past century, except for coal mining communities in north Alabama, and most hilly areas are used for growing timber.

A second section presents a photographic sample and discussion of house types and architectural styles. These include examples of creole houses, the shotgun, single pen, saddlebag, dogtrot, I house, small houses derived from the folk tradition, pyramidal roof houses, bungalow, Greek Revival, and examples of the Gothic Revival style. Illustrations of public buildings such as town halls, county court houses, railway depots, lodges, churches and some of the nineteenth century buildings at Searcy Hospital at Mt. Vernon are also included.



Chapter II describes the types of watercraft that were associated with the lower Black Warrior-Tombigbee corridor. Terminating at the head of Mobile Bay, the watercraft included deep water and coastal vessels as well as bay and river boats. The surviving Indian boats, whether from the prehistoric or the historic period, are similar in form, being rather blunt-ended wooden dugouts about 12 to 15 feet long and around 2 to 2.5 feet wide. The early colonial period vessels were European types of which few descriptions survive. Bird's-eye views of Dauphin Island and Biloxi depict several smaller sailing and rowing vessels and ships.

After the acquisition of West Florida by the United States, ship and riverboat traffic greatly increased and Mobile became a major port for exports of agricultural products and coal, but it was not a major ship or boat building center. River and bay steamers, mostly built elsewhere, were used regularly until after World War I. Most of these vessels were lost from accidents and after the recovery of useful machinery and parts they were commonly abandoned in the rivers and bayous. The remains of some of these can still be seen.

Chapter III is a description of some of the river-oriented industries that were identified during this reconnaissance. Included in the report are musselling, stave-making, and pull-boat logging. Musselling, or fresh water clam collecting, was, in prehistoric time, practiced for food collecting. The recent activity, which was carried on for about twenty years, ending about 1965, was to obtain material primarily for making buttons. The shellfish were caught by dragging a board, called a brail, to which were attached a large number of wires. The clams closed on the wires and were collected and boiled. The meat was discarded and the shells were sold to itinerant buyers.

Stave-making was an industry said to have been introduced into the Black Warrior-Tombigbee corridor in 1900. Yugoslavs were commissioned to come to the United States to cut timber and make barrel staves. White oak was the primary wood although some red oak and post oak was also used. The staves were shipped to Europe and were made into barrels for wine, whisky, and palm oil. Most of the Yugoslavs migrated to other parts of the country with the decline of European markets in World War II.

Pull-boat logging was the principal means of obtaining timber in the Mobile Delta swamps. It appears to have been introduced from Louisiana where this technology was widely used. It employed a barge-mounted steam or motor driven winch to which a long steel cable was attached. This was used to pull logs through the swamp along lines that were cleared. The cable was secured to the end of a log and a steel cone was placed over it. The logs were retrieved and in the process, a cut was formed across the swamp. Canals and mooring sites were dredged out in these operations. These, together with the log drag lines, are still apparent on aerial photographs many years after the logging, so the industry had a distinctive and long-lasting imprint on the swamp environment. Although one or two pull-boats are still operating, this method of logging is not commonly used at present.

The last chapter in the Special Studies volume is concerned with engineering structures that cross the Black Warrior-Tombigbee River. These include one highway tunnel, six highway bridges, and one combination rail and highway bridge, two railroad bridges, three obsolete lock and dam structures, and two modern lock and dam structures.

The highway tunnel in the corridor is the Bankhead Tunnel at the foot of Government Street in Mobile. Completed in 1941, it was made locally of a series of steel tubes joined together. It connected Government Street directly to the Cochrane Bridge/causeway. The name Cochrane Bridge originally designated a system of five bridges and causeways that opened in 1927 crossing the end of the Mobile Delta. Privately built, it was obtained by the State Highway Department in 1939. The remaining original active bridge of the system is that over the Mobile River, a center lift Parker through truss bridge and is the only bridge eligible for the National Register that crosses the lower Black Warrior-Tombigbee River.

The great majority of highway bridges over the small valleys were recent concrete girder deck truss types. Most interesting are the steel truss bridges over the rivers. Several are combinations of trestles and deck and through truss types.

Of the other highway bridges over the river, the one at Pennington is unique in serving both as a railroad bridge and highway bridge. Two other railway bridges cross the lower Black Warrior-Tombigbee and several others cross channels in the Mobile Delta. The series of Louisville and Nashville rail bridges are all Warren through truss structures, some combined with deck trusses and trestles.

Locks 1, 2, and 3 of the first permanent improved navigation system, 1896-1915, are located in the Black Warrior-Tombigbee corridor below Demopolis. Lock 1 has been left intact on a by-passed meander of the river. Locks 2 and 3 were partially dismantled in order to give clearance in the new navigation system which includes new locks and dams near Jackson and Demopolis.

## SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cultural Resources Reconnaissance of the Black Warrior-Tombigbee Corridor had as one objective the identification of the various kinds of human activity and a predictive model for historic and prehistoric sites. While none of our knowledge is complete, we can, based on our studies, recommend caution before any significant physical alterations to the corridor are made. Clearly over the past several thousand years many hundreds of people have used the environments of the Black Warrior-Tombigbee corridor. Any excavation or spoil disposal site should be examined for cultural remains. Many sites, buried by natural processes, may be encountered during the industrial or other excavations. Cultural materials may be underwater in the active channels and distributaries. Specifically, the following areas should be surveyed prior to any excavation or spoil deposition.

- 1) Projected cuts in the active channel for aiding river navigation and their spoil disposal sites.
- 2) Well drained uplands and bluffs within 500m of the active and inactive channels throughout the corridor, and uplands fringing the delta adjacent to any tributary or distributary junctions.
- 3) Natural levees of stream channels in the floodplain, particularly within 500m of the present active channels in the river portion of the corridor, and within 500m of large connecting distributary channels in the delta.
- 4) The Delta Marsh surface, which contains a number of small historic sites.
- 5) The distributary channels of the delta in which submerged vessels may be located.

Future investigations should be specifically directed toward particular questions, areas, or toward particular sites. Adequate funding will be necessary. In the event of another multi-disciplinary study, more local or in-state researchers should be utilized when possible to facilitate logistics and communications. This reconnaissance was successfully concluded within the original budget, although additional time was granted to complete the necessary corrections and editing of the four principal volumes.

**END**

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